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OLC 71-1011

23 September 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Conversation with Carl Marcy, Chief of Staff, Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Regarding Request for National Estimates on Southeast Asia

1. This afternoon I met with Mr. Marcy to discuss Senator J. W. Fulbright's request to the Director for National Intelligence Estimates and Special National Intelligence Estimates on Southeast Asia and Vietnam from 1947 to date. I told Mr. Marcy that I was reasonably sure this was something we simply couldn't do, and he said he was not surprised. He suggested a compromise solution involving only a limited number of Estimates dealing with certain specific subjects and within a more limited time period. I said this would hardly solve our problem either, but there must be some way of skinning the cat without getting blood on the rug. I said, off the top of my head, I thought we might have a better chance of finding an amicable solution if they wouldn't ask for National Estimates, but simply give us some specific questions regarding the Agency's position on certain matters at certain periods in the history of the Southeast Asian developments. He said this was worth considering and we might consult our principals regarding this and other possible suggestions and be back in touch next week.

2. In response to my question, Mr. Marcy said the Committee was trying to get a balanced picture of the history of Southeast Asian developments, and had the 47 volumes of the "Pentagon Papers" as a starting point, but was not satisfied that these would present a complete or balanced record. They wanted to be sure that their conclusions were based on all available relevant material, including intelligence information and Estimates. In this connection, he said they wanted to examine the "input" to the decision making process during the period in question,

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and ascertain which reports and recommendations were objective, which were the product of "self-deception" especially by the military, and which ones appear to have the greatest impact on policy formulation. As an example, he quoted from one of the volumes of the "Pentagon Papers" picked up at random (Volume 16, page 36) referring to a memorandum from Sherman Kent to the Director.

3. Mr. Marcy said that Seth Tillman would be the chief Committee staff member conducting this study and we should eventually deal with him in the matter. He said the Committee had hired two younger additions for the staff, fresh from the academic world who didn't know much about Southeast Asia but were outstanding researchers. One of these is named Bob Biles who had just been cleared.

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